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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9445
INFO RUCNCAN/ALL CANADIAN POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY 0364
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0459
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAORC/US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEADRO/HQ ICE DRO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS OTTAWA 000378

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR HSTC, G/TIP, WHA/CAN

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SUBJECT: FROM COAST TO COAST - CANADA COMBATING HUMAN
SMUGGLING

11. (U) Summary. The recent conviction of a British Columbia couple that had smuggled Indian nationals from Canada into the United States through the Peace Arch border crossing and arrests by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) of four people in Ontario and New Brunswick involved in a human smuggling ring demonstrate that Canada continues to combat human smuggling literally coast to coast. End summary.

12. (U) On May 15, a U.S. District Court in Seattle sentenced a Surrey, British Columbia (BC) couple for conspiracy to smuggle people into the United States from Canada through the Peace Arch Park, which borders Surrey and Blaine, Washington. Jas Binning, 48, received a six months sentence, while his wife, Jagdeep Binning, 32, faces only time served. The judge also imposed a US\$5000 fine. The couple charged citizens of India \$5000 to drive them from Vancouver International Airport to the Peace Arch Park, and then to smuggle them into Washington State posing as tourists. The pair charged other foreign nationals, including those from Pakistan, higher rates. The smugglers offered additional services for higher fees, including onward transportation to Bellingham, Washington and provision of fake Canadian driver's license. Court documents show that the couple smuggled two to twelve migrants into the U.S. each month. Undercover RCMP officers posing as migrants gathered key evidence submitted to the court. The RCMP worked alongside U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers from ConGen Vancouver as well as from Blaine and Seattle to develop the case. The BC Office of Civil Forfeitures is now pursuing civil action against the offenders to seize their property (adjacent to the Peace Arch crossing), which they had used to facilitate their crimes. According to Canadian law enforcement officials, the Civil Forfeiture law -- in place in BC since 2006 -- holds great promise as a tool against traffickers, by allowing the government to pursue action in civil court, with its significantly lower threshold of evidence than criminal court.

13. (U) In an unrelated case, the RCMP on May 13 charged four individuals with smuggling migrants from Ontario and New Brunswick into the United States. Savita Singh, 43, and Vaughn McLuskey, 71, were arrested in New Brunswick, and Mohamed Habib-Yusef, 53, and Ravindra Harprasad, 36, in Ontario. The RCMP investigation prevented the illegal smuggling of two Guyanese migrants to the U.S. In a press release, RCMP Sgt. Wesley Blair stated that "since organized crime groups involved in human smuggling are profit-driven, they do not often distinguish between migrants who are looking for a better way of life and migrants who are dangerous criminals." According to RCMP contacts, Canadian

law enforcement officers began their investigation a year ago after receiving a tip from the U.S. Border Patrol. Investigations into the smuggling operation continue, and RCMP officials expect more information will come to light as a result.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: The RCMP, Canada Border Services Agency, and local and provincial police forces are actively working with U.S. law enforcement counterparts to tackle human smuggling and human trafficking. These recent actions demonstrate Canada's commitment to targeting smuggling -- literally, coast to coast -- and highlight the connections between smuggling and other criminal activities.

¶5. (U) ConGens Vancouver and Halifax contributed to this reporting.

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